



Vladimir and the Origin of the Russian Church. Part II

Author(s): N. Zernov

Source: *The Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 28, No. 71 (Apr., 1950), pp. 425-438

Published by: the [Modern Humanities Research Association](#) and [University College London, School of Slavonic and East European Studies](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4204143>

Accessed: 18/06/2014 07:13

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VLADIMIR AND THE ORIGIN OF THE RUSSIAN CHURCH

PART II

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ST. VLADIMIR is the Charlemagne of Russian history ; he was the great Empire builder, who not only extended his dominion far and wide over the Slavonic, Lithuanian and Finnish population of the Russian Plain, but who also kept peace and order within the vast territory for thirty-five years. The most remarkable of his qualities was his ability to exercise such complete control over his people that no serious rebellion occurred during his lifetime. He was not, however, a dread tyrant ruling his newly conquered subjects with an iron rod : on the contrary, he has forever remained the most popular sovereign of Russian history, who by his generosity and warm-heartedness won the lasting affection of the nation. A statesman of such exceptional ability could not have failed to realise the importance of the religious factor in the expansion and consolidation of his dominion. His empire was linked with other attempts made by different Slavonic rulers of the 9th, 10th and 11th centuries to weld their dispersed people into one powerful whole.⁶⁹ The Slav princes were confronted by many obstacles ; they were exposed to the hostility of their neighbours, they were victims of their own rivalries and of dissensions among their followers. Religion was also one of their greatest problems, as Slavonic paganism with its cult of family ancestors (*rod*) was opposed to any wider political union. It was essential for the Slavonic leaders to find some other religious foundation for their growing States, and Christianity was the obvious alternative. Attempts to build the Slav Empires went side by side, therefore, with missionary efforts usually sponsored by their own rulers. This policy, however, was accompanied by the danger of losing political independence. According to the accepted tradition of that time, a ruler who embraced the religion professed by his neighbours had to acknowledge his teacher as his suzeran.⁷⁰ Vladimir made an attempt to christianise his realm without surrendering his sovereignty either to the Eastern or Western Emperors, and this he successfully achieved.

He timed his own baptism to coincide with a Byzantine military distaste so that the Basileus were obliged to solicit his aid, while not able to press upon him any obligations. Two years later he succeeded in obtaining bishops for his country under equally favourable circumstances. After the capture of Kherson he was once more in the position to dictate his conditions to the sorely tried Emperors and accordingly he chose his own men for the key ecclesiastical posts in Russia. Unfortunately we do not know either the number of bishops brought by Vladimir from the Crimea or their previous status.⁷¹ Nevertheless, it is possible to assert that at least two of them were selected by Vladimir—Anastas for Kiev, and Ioakhim for Novgorod.⁷²

As for Anastas, the *Povest* suggests that he was not a bishop at the time of his selection: his ordination, therefore, took place either in Kherson, where several prelates came from the capital with Princess Anna, or in Constantinople itself, where Vladimir sent his envoys after the surrender of the Crimean city. Anastas was not likely to be regarded as a desirable candidate by the Byzantine authorities; but in 989, when the Emperors were forced to deliver their sister to Vladimir, the ordination of anyone proposed by the Russian Prince could not easily be resisted.

Thus Vladimir was able to secure the hierarchy for his Church without surrendering his sovereignty to the Emperors; and by a careful choice of his leading bishop he avoided an embarrassing dependence on the Patriarch of Constantinople, usually an obedient supporter of the Basileus. This initial success placed Vladimir in a favourable position in the conflict between Rome and Constantinople, one of the most decisive features of European politics of the 10th and 11th centuries. Unfortunately for the Slavs, the formation of their new states coincided with serious deterioration in the relations between Eastern and Western Christendom, accentuated by the Frankish revival of the Roman Empire of the West in the 9th century. It was then not enough for the Slavic rulers to accept the truth of Christianity: they had also to make the choice between two hostile parties, both claiming to be the sole representative of the Catholic Church. The Slavs were originally neutral in the quarrel between the Greeks and the Latins; and their very neutrality precipitated the process of the dismemberment of Christendom, since both Rome and Constantinople, in order to strengthen their own position, made frantic efforts to win over these newcomers to their side. The Slavs were thus the first to suffer from the schism, for the sharp line of demarcation between the Latin and the Greek

traditions cut across them and made it impossible for them to find in the Church that unifying factor they were so earnestly seeking. The tragic fate of the Moravian Kingdom, the uneasy balance of the Bulgarians between Rome and Constantinople, the permanent split between Serbs and Croats were expressions of the same conflict.

Vladimir displayed marked resource in dealing with this difficult problem. He acted with skill and caution, reorientating several times his ecclesiastical plans to suit his political designs. After an abortive attempt to unite his Empire by means of a heathen pantheon, an experiment lasting from 980 to 985,⁷³ he placed his trust in the Christian religion, though avoiding any final commitment either to its Eastern or Western form. At first he seemed to be captivated by the desire to establish his control over the Eastern Empire. Constantinople played a fatal rôle in the history of the Eastern Slavs. Seduced by the example of Charlemagne, Emperor of the West, the Bulgarian, Serbian and Russian rulers dissipated their strength in vain attempts to be crowned as Basileus in the Queen of all cities (Tsargrad). This desire to be master of the Imperial capital was at the same time a powerful factor in the conversion of many Slavonic potentates to the Byzantine tradition of Christianity, and Vladimir's decision to embrace that particular creed was probably motivated by the same reason. He backed Basil II, expecting him to be weaker than the Asiatic rebels; but Basil proved to be one of the greatest military leaders in Byzantine history, and Vladimir realised in time the changed situation. Finding expansion southwards blocked, he still did not altogether abandon his plans for enlarging the sphere of his influence. He reshaped his policy, concentrating his attention upon the West,⁷⁴ and this change was necessarily accompanied by a corresponding modification of his ecclesiastical plans. During the last twenty years of his rule nothing is heard about the relations between Russia and Byzantium. It appears that a strict policy of non-intervention was maintained both by Basil and Vladimir. This neutrality reduced the church contacts between the two States to a minimum, but Vladimir's behaviour towards his Western neighbours was different. There he played an increasingly active rôle, aiming at the establishment of ascendancy among the Slavonic and Hungarian peoples, though mainly by means of diplomacy and friendly contacts.

The *Povest* is emphatic about Vladimir's close relations with his Western allies. "Vladimir lived at peace with his neighbouring Princes, Bolesław of Poland (992-1025), Stephan of Hungary (997-1038), and Andrick of Bohemia (1034), and there was a mighty

friendship among them.”⁷⁵ Tatishchev adds a significant comment : he states that these princes “ recognised Vladimir as the senior and most powerful amongst the Slavs.”⁷⁶ The leading position thus established among the States of Central Europe presupposes the absence of religious tensions between Russia and her Western neighbours. The latter looked upon Rome as their ecclesiastical superior, and this meant that Vladimir maintained good terms also with the Latin authorities. This policy was dictated not only by the requirements of his foreign relations but equally by the internal conditions of his Empire. The mixed population of his realm, the international character of his capital, point to the co-existence of Christians of diverse traditions in Russia of the 10th century. Kiev at this time was an important trading centre where the routes from the North to the South, and from the East to the West crossed ; where the Greek, Latin and Oriental Christians were forced to live side by side within the city walls. A ruler of Vladimir’s ability would be interested in the maintenance of peace and friendship among the representatives of all Christian Creeds. He would probably avoid taking any step which could alienate any of them ; on the contrary, his intention would be to popularise himself by including them all within the fold of the Metropolitan Church. The compiler of the *Povest* records various facts which show that Vladimir shaped the Russian Church in accordance with the Byzantine pattern : but the same author only indirectly refers to links existing at that time between the Russian Church and Western Christians. Nevertheless, these contacts are important, and prove that Vladimir was determined to maintain a careful balance between the Greek and the Latin portions of Christendom. For instance, he invited Greek masters to build his magnificent Cathedral, but he ordered them to erect a building which incorporated features common to the West ;⁷⁷ he introduced the Byzantine rite into the principal churches of his realm, but he organised ecclesiastical administration along Western lines by making the Tithe System its foundation.⁷⁸ Finally, he brought his leading prelates from Crimea, but when, in 1018, a pro-Byzantine and anti-Western party triumphed in Kiev, his chief bishop, Anastas,⁷⁹ fled to Poland, thereby suggesting the existence of amicable ties between the Church of Kiev and the Western Christians.

To these significant facts, reported by the *Povest*, several more found in other sources can be added. The Church Order which bears Vladimir’s name and is preserved in many copies is of distinctly Western origin.⁸⁰ The Chronicle of Nikon describes

frequent exchanges of envoys between Kiev and Rome. They are mentioned in the years 991, 994, 1000, 1001.⁸¹ Tatishchev also refers to these discussions.⁸² The Nikon Chronicles state, moreover, that Vladimir received the papal representatives "with love and honour,"⁸³ which in the language of that time meant a satisfactory conclusion of negotiations. Unfortunately the source of this information is not known, and its evidence must be used with caution. Nevertheless, it is improbable that the Russian Chronicler of the 15th and 16th centuries invented these discussions between Rome and Vladimir, for hostility to Latin Christians was universal and bitter in Russia at that time. But even if these direct relations with Rome are dismissed as doubtful, there are other, and this time undisputed, proofs of Vladimir's friendly disposition towards Latin Christians. For instance, there is a letter by an ardent missionary called St. Bruno de Querfurt, who in 1008 sent to the Emperor Henry II (1002-1024) a detailed report of his stay in Kiev.⁸⁴ Vladimir most cordially received the Latin monk, and tried to persuade him to remain in Russia.

A still more significant incident is reported by Thietmar de Merseburg.⁸⁵ According to him, Sviatopolk, one of Vladimir's sons who married a Polish Princess, brought to Turov, the city of his residence, Reinbern, Bishop of Kolberg. This Latin Prelate soon acquired great political power but perished in a prison, having been accused of a plot against Vladimir in favour of Sviatopolk. The important position ascribed to a Western Bishop in this story suggests also that Russian Christians were in full communion with the Roman Church at that time. The same conclusion is supported by the part played by Olaf Trygvason in the christianisation of Russia. Olaf was Vladimir's old friend and companion-in-arms. After many adventures he was converted by a Celtic monk during a raid on the Scilly Islands. He became an ardent missionary, and the Scandinavian Sagas ascribe to his influence Vladimir's decision to give up his paganism.⁸⁶ The Sagas are usually inclined to magnify the deeds of their heroes, but there is indisputable proof that Olaf participated in the Crimean campaign and had an important part in the final settlement which secured for the Russian Church the status desired by the victorious Prince. This is shown by the interesting fact that Olaf, after his return to Norway, dedicated the Cathedral built by him in Nidaros (Trondheim) in 997 to St. Clement of Rome; ⁸⁷ the relics of that saint were solemnly transferred by Vladimir from the conquered Kherson to his capital.⁸⁸ That act had great symbolic meaning, for it associated the newly founded

Chair of Kiev with the authority of the Roman Pontiff, and endowed the Russian Church with high dignity and independence. By dedicating his own Church to the same saint, Olaf clearly implied that he also contributed to Vladimir's triumph over the Byzantine Empire.

But the most revealing of all the Western contacts of Vladimir's Church are those which united it with its Slavonic neighbours in Bohemia, Poland and Pannonia. The inhabitants of these countries were the nearest to the Kievans linguistically, racially and geographically. Christianity began to spread among the Western Slavs during the second part of the 9th century. The mission of Cyril (869) and Methodius (885) planted a Slavonic-speaking Church in Central Europe, but this attempt to use their mother-tongue in worship met with fierce opposition on the German side, and by the end of the 11th century Latin replaced Slavonic all over Poland, Bohemia and Hungary.

In the course of the 10th century the Western Slav-speaking Churches were still fully alive, and Prof. Nikolski, in his last work (unfortunately unfinished), produced weighty proofs that the Poliane, i.e. the bulk of the Slavic population in and around Kiev, considered the Western Slavs as their teachers in Christ.⁸⁹ If Nikolski is right, then the majority of Russian Christians at the time of Vladimir's conversion were familiar with a Church tradition that was Byzantine in rite, Slavonic in speech and Latin as far as its canonical allegiance was concerned. But even without deciding by which channel Christianity first reached the Kievan people it is possible to assert that they maintained a close fellowship with the Bohemian Christians during Vladimir's reign. This is proved by the widespread popularity among the Russians of St. Venceslav (d. 929) and St. Ludmila (d. 927), two well-known Bohemian saints,⁹⁰ and by the cult of St. Boris and Gleb (d. 1015) among the Czechs. These first canonised Russian saints (1025) were venerated as late as 1095 in the Sazava Monastery, the last stronghold of Slavonic Christianity in Central Europe.⁹¹ The reciprocal recognition of their saints by two sister Churches is the more remarkable in that St. Venceslav remained unknown among the Southern Orthodox Slavs, so the story of the hero-martyr of Bohemia must have reached Kiev by a direct route from its Western neighbours.⁹² Boris, Vladimir's favourite son, was acquainted with the life of the Bohemian martyr,⁹³ and this suggests the presence at the Kievan Court of well-instructed and keen Czech Christians. The compiler of the *Povest* makes no reference to close friendship between the Kievans and the Western Slavs during these vital years of the Russian Church. Their co-

operation is a link missed in his narrative ; and its absence renders inexplicable the rapid expansion of Christianity throughout Russia in the 11th century, one of the most notable features of early Russian Church history.⁹⁴

These episodes, in spite of being unco-ordinated, are of great value in reconstructing the constitution of the Russian Church in the 10th century. They all indicate that Vladimir borrowed freely from diverse sources, choosing for the Russian Church the best elements from Byzantine, Western and Slavic traditions, and adapting them to the needs of his people. He was engaged in the building of a Slavonic Empire, equal if not superior to the two broken halves of the old Roman world ; and he saw in a Church so constituted and obedient to his will a unifying force for the peoples inhabiting his vast dominion. The freedom of his church from any outside control would be needed for the fulfilment of his political and ecclesiastical plans, but the possibility of such autonomy is usually denied by the historians who take for granted that Vladimir was obliged to invest some foreign prelate with the final canonical authority over the Church of his Empire.⁹⁵ Opinions are divided as to who this supervisor was. Constantinople, Rome, Ochrida and Tmutorkan all have their supporters. The most popular among these conflicting theories regards the Patriarch of Constantinople as the man to whom the Russian bishops owed their allegiance in the 10th century ; but the mixed origin of the Russian Christians who had friendly contacts both with the Western Slavs and the Orthodox East, and Vladimir's own political schemes suggest that the simple incorporation of the Kievan Church into the Patriarchate of Constantinople would not be an easy matter. It would have required on Vladimir's part a readiness to make serious concessions and to impose considerable limitations upon the Christian community within his realm.

There is no evidence that he ever intended, or actually did, anything of this sort. On the contrary, the unwillingness of the *Povest* to disclose the status of the presiding Kievan bishop, and its reluctance to discuss Vladimir's ecclesiastical policy can be taken as a weighty though indirect proof that the Russian Church was not under the authority of the Constantinople Patriarchs at that time. This supposition is confirmed by the events of the next reign—that of Yaroslav the Wise (1018–1054). In 1037 Yaroslav subjected the Russian Church to Constantinople and received from there a Greek Metropolitan, Theopemptus, the first bishop of Kiev to be mentioned by the *Povest*.⁹⁶

The arrival of this Greek Prelate was followed by two acts which seem to imply an ecclesiastical revolution. First, Yaroslav built for that occasion a Cathedral, constructed in strict conformity with the Byzantine tradition, which he dedicated to St. Sophia. He clearly expressed by this action his desire to make the Russian Church a faithful daughter-Church of Constantinople. The unusual decision to build a new Cathedral side by side with the one erected by his father can be taken to indicate that a new start in ecclesiastical organisation was contemplated, past policy being not only abandoned but tacitly condemned. This impression is still further strengthened by a second, even more surprising act, which is faithfully reported without any explanation or comment by all Russian Chronicles—viz., the consecration of the old Cathedral by the Greek Metropolitan in 1039.⁹⁷ Such an act can have two meanings: ⁹⁸ *either* that the Cathedral of the Tithe which for more than forty years was the centre of Church life in the Kievan Empire remained unconsecrated until the Greek Prelate arrived in the Capital, *or* that its original consecration was performed by a person or in a manner unsatisfactory to the Byzantine party. This second explanation seems to be the more plausible, and it supports the thesis that the Russian Church was under some jurisdiction other than that of Constantinople from 990 to 1037.

The exclusion of Constantinople from the list of Russia's ecclesiastical superiors, leaves Rome as the next candidate. Theoretically speaking, it is even more difficult to imagine that the Vladimir who imitated the Byzantine Basileus would be ready to submit to Rome and in this way to recognise the Papal supremacy over his Church and Empire. It is difficult to see why he should have taken such drastic action or, if he did, why no trace of his submission to Rome has been preserved in contemporary documents. The only argument in support of the Roman theory is the negotiations conducted between Vladimir and Rome, as reported, e.g., by the later Chronicles of Nikon. But even if they are accepted as reliable, allowance must be made for the wide gap between friendly contacts and formal submission. While some evidence of the former exists, there is not even a remote indication of the latter: neither Rome nor Constantinople can, therefore, be regarded as the Ecclesiastical Superiors of the newly born Russian Church.

Two other suggestions remain: the Russian Church may have been either under the jurisdiction of the Bulgarian Patriarch or under the Archbishop of Tmutorkan. Neither of these suppositions is supported by any documentary proof: nevertheless, such an

ecclesiastical arrangement is theoretically possible, but only if it is supposed that Vladimir or his advisers were seriously concerned with the niceties of canonical order, and tried to overcome every scruple.

Now there is no evidence that Vladimir was really interested in these subtleties. It is probable that the question of political prestige weighed more heavily upon him than the considerations of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Moreover it is difficult to see how a ruler with Vladimir's ambitions could consent to treat the hierarch of a rival Bulgarian State as the head of his Imperial Church, or that he would offer such an honour to the Archbishop of a conquered provincial city like Tmutorkan.

The erection of a magnificent Cathedral in Kiev, the rich endowments bestowed upon it, the great pomp which accompanied its dedication—all these facts reported in the *Povest*⁹⁹ lose their meaning if the Russian Prince had not a bishop of his own in his capital. The question of canonical authority, recognised during Vladimir's reign by the Kievan bishop, is therefore unanswered by the four best-known theories. Their failure lends an additional support to the suggestion that Vladimir, the master of his Empire and founder of the Russian Church, treated the latter as an autonomous body.

Sources contemporary with Vladimir treat him as an autocrat. He behaved as a monarch who believed his own authority to be sufficient in all ecclesiastical matters.¹⁰⁰ His Church Order can be quoted as a typical example of this attitude; it contains, for example, the following sentences: "Having opened the Greek Nomocanon We found in it that neither to the Prince nor to his boiars is it proper to interfere with Church Courts. And, having consulted my Princess Anna and my children, we granted the administration of these Courts to the Metropolitan."¹⁰¹

In these injunctions Vladimir claimed to have the final say in the interpretation of the Canon Law. He looked upon himself as a potentate possessing the same prerogatives in regard to the Church as those belonging to the Byzantine Emperors and only an independent status for his Church could satisfy his ambition.

Effective opposition to this type of constitution could come only from Constantinople. But Vladimir's military might, the political stability of his Empire and the special circumstances under which he obtained from Byzantium his first bishops made any intervention from that quarter most unlikely, and, as a matter of fact, none is heard of. There was equally no reason to expect any resistance to his policy from the Russian side. The bulk of the Russian Christians were new converts who would have little concern for the

canonical authority of their hierarchs. The bishops and the rest of the clergy were selected by the Prince and he chose them because of their willingness to obey his orders.

Opposition came later, and its ardent spokesman was no other than the compiler of the *Povest* himself. His ambiguous attitude to Vladimir, his irreconcilable hostility to Anastas, fits in well with the suggested independence of the Russian Church. For if the Kievan Metropolitan was under Constantinople, he would be recognised as such by one so ardently orthodox as the compiler; if the Kievan Prelate was under "heretical" Rome, he would probably be attacked by the compiler who was bitterly anti-Latin; if Anastas was under Tmutorkan or Ochrida, both Seats in communion with Constantinople, there would be no reason to conceal such a fact. But the autonomous status raised a number of highly controversial problems not suitable for public debate in the 11th century, and the compiler was forced to keep silence. If he frankly criticised Vladimir's conduct it would bring him into collision with the Metropolitan Hilarion and other influential men who tried, in the middle of the century, to bring about the canonisation of the great Prince. If he accepted Anastas as a lawful bishop, he would commit himself to the denial of the Constantinopolitan claims to supremacy, and, much worse still, to approval of Vladimir's friendly relations with the Christian West.¹⁰²

In the compiler's eyes Vladimir's policy of neutrality between Rome and Byzantium was a serious breach of Orthodoxy,¹⁰³ for it showed lack of zeal for divinely revealed truth. In the course of the 11th century the hostility between the Greeks and the Latins was expanding so rapidly in all directions that an increasing number of Christians were determined to sever the last links still uniting the two halves of Catholic Christendom. The compiler was a typical representative of this new temper; he wanted to see the Russian Church an exact replica of the Byzantine pattern, and he looked upon Constantinople as the only source from which the light of Christian Truth could ever reach Russia. He was, therefore, particularly opposed to all those ties which bound Kiev with the Western Slavs, who, in his view, were tainted by their association with heretical Rome.¹⁰⁴

It is typical that against the evidence of his own quotations from the older sources,¹⁰⁵ the compiler tried to give his readers the impression that darkness and paganism reigned to such an extent in Russia that even in Kiev human sacrifices were offered,¹⁰⁶ till Byzantine clergy delivered the Russians from this servitude to sin.

In the view of the compiler the conduct of the great Russian Prince was deplorable. Nevertheless, Vladimir had some points in his favour: He not only baptised the bulk of the Russians but chose the Byzantine rite for their Church. Moreover, the serious defects of his ecclesiastical policy were mitigated by the fact that he was only a layman whose main concern was the State, not the Church.

No such excuse was possible in regard to Anastas, and for this reason all the venom of ecclesiastical strife was poured out on that Prelate. This bitter animosity could not have been personal, as the compiler belonged to the following generation. Therefore the attacks must have been inspired by religious convictions, and they alone sufficiently explain why Anastas was described as a villain and was never called by his proper ecclesiastical title.

The history of the Russian Church during the stormy period after Vladimir's death lies outside the scope of this article. Without entering into a discussion of the reasons which forced Yaroslav the Wise to recognise the authority of Constantinople, it is necessary, however, to mention one aspect of the conflict between Sviatopolk (1015-1018) and Yaroslav (1018-1054), for it throws some further light upon Vladimir's own ecclesiastical policy.

The bitter struggle between the two brothers is usually represented as caused by their personal rivalry, but it had wider and deeper underlying motives, and one of them was the clash between the Eastern and the Western traditions in the Kievan State. Sviatopolk was the leader of the pro-Western party. He had a number of supporters in Kiev, who probably were interested in closer relationship with the Western Slavs and in the maintenance of the commercial routes via Moravia, the Danube, Regensburg and Flanders.¹⁰⁷ Yaroslav represented Novgorod and its interests, which seemed at that time to be pro-Byzantine. The capital of the North was the rival of the Western Slavs both commercially, politically and ecclesiastically. One could hardly find a more foolish and unworthy representative of any cause than Sviatopolk. His murder of his two remarkable brothers, Boris and Gleb, in 1015, was more than a personal crime: it was the destruction of his father's great scheme to keep open the doors leading both to Constantinople and to Rome. The *Povest*, in accordance with its principles, avoids a direct reference to this implication of fratricide, but its description of Sviatopolk's ignoble death rings with a deep religious passion. There is a rhythm in the words¹⁰⁸ which relate that the "accursed prince" was buried in the Western wilderness¹⁰⁹ between Poland and Bohemia, and that the evil odour issues forth from his doomed

tomb.¹¹⁰ The *Povest* most skilfully makes Sviatopolk the Accursed the spokesman of the Western world, which looked by now barren, condemned, and repulsive.¹¹¹ It was fitting for Anastas, the other villain of Vladimir's reign, to vanish also in the same westerly direction.

Thus the story of Russia's conversion seems to furnish an example of clash between historical reality and the ideal professed by an outstanding ecclesiastical writer. The compiler of the *Povest* made a daring and successful attack upon one of the decisive pages of Russian history, and superimposed upon the actual account of the events his own interpretation, implying that it is of the greatest importance to know how things ought to have happened rather than how they did happen in reality. The compiler was victorious : his version suppressed all other descriptions of Vladimir's ecclesiastical policy, and for centuries to come only his story was accepted by Russians as the true account of the origin of their Church.

In order to achieve his aim he was obliged to draw a distorted picture of the first Christian Sovereign of Russia, and this proved to be the most vulnerable part of his work.

In spite of the compiler's efforts Vladimir has remained the ideal prince of Russian folk-lore, and though it is difficult to separate history and legend so closely interwoven around his remarkable personality, there can be no doubt that he was one of the most successful rulers of Russia, and that there must be some foundation for the traditional belief that he knew the secret of keeping order and peace without the resort to fear and oppression.

Since the rise of Moscow her Tsars have claimed him as their mighty predecessor,¹¹² justifying their autocracy by the example presented to the nation by Vladimir himself. On the surface the parallel between his attitude to the hierarchs and the domineering behaviour of the Basils and Ivans, Alexis and Peter in regard to the Church looks impressive, but Vladimir had breadth of vision and generosity of heart ¹¹³ lacking among his successors.

His endeavours to make the Russian Church a bridge between the East and the West bear the imprint of a great mind. Vladimir saw so far ahead of his generation that the implications of his policy are not fully understood even in the present day.

N. ZERNOV.

London.

⁶⁶ Sviatopulk of Moravia (870-894), Boris of Bulgaria (852-889) and his son Simeon the Great (893-927), Boleslav the Dread (923-967) and Boleslav the Pious (967-999), Princes of Bohemia, and Bolesław the Brave (992-1025), King of Poland, were all striving for the same goal. Vladimir's own father, Sviatoslav (964-972), perished in the pursuit of a similar object.

⁷⁰ Louis II, Emperor of the West, assumed that the acceptance by Boris of Bulgaria of Latin bishops implies Boris' incorporation into his realm. See Dvornik, *The Photian Schism*, Cambridge, 1948, p. 116.

⁷¹ For the possible number of bishops in Russia, see Golubinski, I, p. 334.

⁷² Nikon Chronicle mentions bishops in Chernigov, Rostov, Vladimir and Belgrad, besides Kiev and Novgorod. Nik., IX, p. 65.

⁷³ Lav., p. 34. The presence of non-Slavonic names among the idols set up by Vladimir suggests his desire to provide a common religious basis for the diverse nationalities inhabiting his country, and this is an indication that from the start he treated religion as part of his Imperial policy.

⁷⁴ For the Western orientation of Vladimir's policy, see Vernadsky, *Kievan Russia*, Yale Univ. Press, 1948, pp. 59, 66, 326 sq.

⁷⁵ Lav., p. 54.

⁷⁶ Tatishchev, II, 84. For other references to these relations, see pp. 78, 90, 91.

⁷⁷ The recent excavations have shown that his cathedral did not follow strictly the Byzantine pattern, as was the case with St. Sophia, built by Yaroslav in 1037.

⁷⁸ Golubinski believed that the tithe was borrowed by Vladimir from Poland: I, p. 508 sq.

⁷⁹ The name Korsunin does not mean that Anastas or Bishop Ioakhim of Novgorod were necessarily Greeks; the Russians described by this name all the inhabitants of the Crimea, which had a miscellaneous population in the 10th century. See Lav., p. 22.

⁸⁰ Baumgarten, *St. Vladimir*, p. 107; and Golubinski, I, pp. 400-01.

⁸¹ Nik., IX, pp. 64, 65, 68.

⁸² *Op. cit.*, II, p. 78.

⁸³ Nik., IX, p. 64.

⁸⁴ Pierling, *La Russie et le Saint Siège Paris*, 1896, I, p. x sq.; and Losinskie, *La Russie dans Literat. Fran. de Moyen Âge*, Revue des Études Slaves, 1929, ix, p. 260.

⁸⁵ Chronicon, pp. 96, 236, 239.

⁸⁶ Baumgarten, *St. Vladimir*, p. 70.

⁸⁷ Baumgarten, *Olaf Trygvason*, pp. 9, 30, 34.

⁸⁸ Lav., p. 50.

⁸⁹ Nikolski, *op. cit.*, p. 90 sq. Istrin, however, criticises the Nikolski Thesis. *Moravskaja Istoria Slovan*, Byzantinoslavica 3 (1931), 4 (1932).

⁹⁰ St. Venceslav veneration is specially studied in V. Florovskij. *Cesi a Vychodni Slovane*, Praha, 1935, pp. 120-42.

⁹¹ Florovskij, *op. cit.*, pp. 128, 151.

⁹² Florovskij, *op. cit.*, p. 48 sq.

⁹³ *Žitija Sv. Borisa i Gleba*, Pamiat. Drev.-Rus. Lit., Vol. 2, Petr., 1916, p. 33.

⁹⁴ Golubinski thinks that Vladimir recruited the clergy for the Russian Church from among the inhabitants of Chervonnaia Rus, which was part of Poland until 981: *op. cit.*, I, p. 168.

⁹⁵ Golubinski suggested tentatively the possibility that the Russian Church enjoyed an autocephalous status in Vladimir's time: *op. cit.*, I, p. 268.

⁹⁶ Lav., p. 66; I Nov., p. 69.

⁹⁷ Lav., p. 66; I Nov., p. 89; Nik., IX., p. 81.

⁹⁸ Kiev and its churches were seriously damaged by fire in 1017 (Lav., p. 62) and it is open to suggestion that the reconsecration of 1039 was necessitated by the extensive repairs carried out at the time. This explanation is weakened by several considerations: (a) the chronicles never mentioned that the Cathedral of the Tithe was either damaged or repaired; (b) the building of a new Cathedral simultaneously with extensive repairs of an old one would be financially prohibitive; (c) the special mention by the *Povest* of the consecration of the old Cathedral as being the first public act of the Greek Prelate implies a greater significance of this act than the routine ceremony at the completion of repairs.

⁹⁹ Lav., p. 52.

¹⁰⁰ It is significant that the *Povest* never calls Vladimir "The Autocrat" "samodezhphets," yet the seal found in 1909 near Kiev suggests the use of this title by

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Vladimir. See Prof. Soloviev, *O Pechati it itule Vladimira Byzantino-Slavica*, IX. (1947.)

¹⁰¹ Golubinski, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 616-27.

¹⁰² Yaroslav's conduct of Church affairs presents several unsolved problems: it is possible that his failure to restore the independence of the Russian Church was due to the pro-Western trend of his father's ecclesiastical policy. This was sharply criticised by the leading Churchmen of the 11th century who were therefore unwilling to support Yaroslav's plans.

¹⁰³ Vladimir's neutrality affords the most probable explanation of the Greek refusal to sanction his canonisation; he was added to the list of Russian Saints only in the 13th century, when the events of his reign were forgotten.

¹⁰⁴ The intensity of the anti-Western feelings can best be judged from the content of the epistle of S. Theodosius to Prince Iziaslav (d. 1078), in which Latins were presented as more impure than Jews; every contact with them both ecclesiastically and socially was to be avoided. The text of his epistle and commentaries are published in *Trudy otdela, Drev. Russkoi Literatury*, Vol. V, Akad. Moscow, 1947, pp. 160, 170-73.

¹⁰⁵ Lav., p. 6.

¹⁰⁶ Lav., p. 35.

¹⁰⁷ V. Vassilevski, *Drevnaia Torgoulia Kieva s Regensburgom*, Zhurnal Minist. Narod. Prosviash, 1888, V, 258.

¹⁰⁸ Lav., p. 63. "Liakhy i Chiakhy."

¹⁰⁹ The author of the *Povest* as well as his readers knew that a desert in the ordinary sense of the word could not be found anywhere near Poland or Bohemia. He used this word in another sense. This desert indicated that the Western Slavs who before and during Vladimir's time were the source of Christian enlightenment to the young Russian Church were now associated with error, evil smell and darkness.

¹¹⁰ An evil smell is the traditional Russian characteristic of sin and perdition; fragrance is the sign of bliss and holiness.

¹¹¹ According to the Kievan Paterik the devil takes the form of a Pole when he wants to attack the Russian ascetics. Theodosius of Pechersk (d. 1074), writing to Prince Iziaslav of Kiev (d. 1074), used the following expression: "The Latins have polluted the whole world."

¹¹² See the first Epistle of Tsar Ivan Vasilievich to Prince Andrei Kukbski (1564).

¹¹³ Kartashev (A. V.), *St. Vladimir the Father of Russian culture* (in Russian), Paris, 1938, p. 15 sq.